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PUNCH



JUNE
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1943

Vol. CCIV
No. 5339

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years ago"**

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"It is interesting to note that the date on the stamp and on J. M. Barrie's letter is the same, i.e., 1897."

[The original of this letter can be seen at Arcadia Works]

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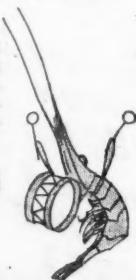
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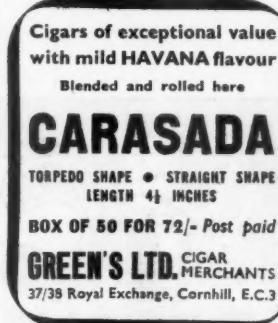
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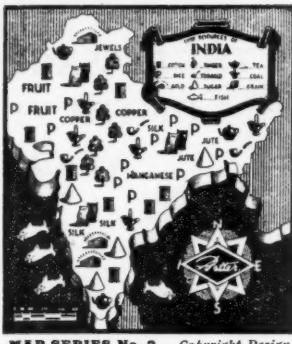


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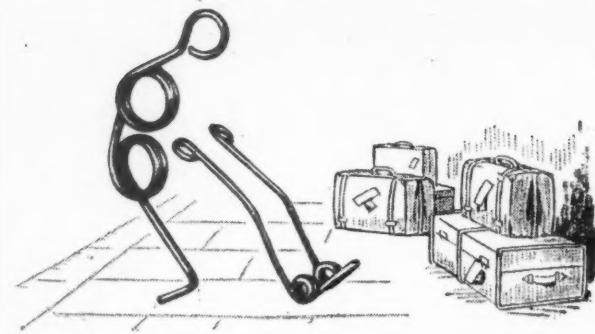


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Make this long-life brush last longer still . . .

Tek toothbrushes, like most good things, are scarce to-day. They are still being made, they are still to be found in the shops — but there are an awful lot of people looking for them! So if you possess a Tek toothbrush already — or if you are fortunate enough to buy one — take care of it. Every Tek toothbrush is designed to give long and useful service. It is made with care: and it will handsomely repay careful treatment. Always rinse a Tek after use; for if toothpaste is allowed to cling to the bristles and dry on them, their resilience will suffer. After rinsing, shake the brush and leave it in the open. Never put a wet toothbrush into a cupboard.

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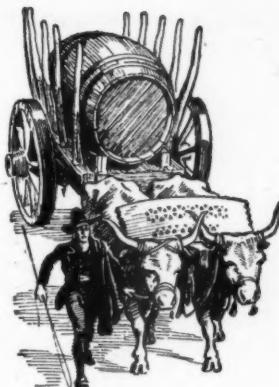
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Meltonian White Cleaner was made to do just this job — and do it well! It can be applied easily and evenly and has changed what used to be a 'messy' business into a task as simple as shoe-polishing.

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WHITE
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In solid or liquid form

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For over half a century STATE EXPRESS 555 have maintained their reputation as the world's finest cigarettes.



THE old traditions of fine ingredients and 'home-baking', which for nearly a century made Romary the connoisseur's biscuit, are still being observed . . . so that, in these days, Romary Biscuits are in every way the best that 'points' can buy.

ROMARY

'TUNBRIDGE WELLS' BISCUITS

Thanksgiving!

We owe a debt of gratitude to our men in the Services—a debt that can never be paid. But we can express our gratitude in helping to meet the cost of Parcels to our Prisoners—which is now at the rate of

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A YEAR

A gift from your Jewel Case to the Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross and St. John Fund will help. Send please, to the Treasurer, Red Cross Sales, 17, Old Bond Street, London, W.1, for the next

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THE PASSAGE OF THE YEARS

HERE you see the latest model Singer as it stood in front of the coach house, newly delivered from the works, on a Spring morning in 1904. As a matter of fact, this particular model was subsequently driven around the Yorkshire Wolds by its owner-driver for three

exciting years; and it would appear that the impression it made upon him was considerable. For during the next thirty years this motorist owned seven more cars—and they were all Singers. Now, what is it about the Singer? Perhaps the fact that this particular motorist was himself a qualified Automobile Engineer may provide you with a clue.

SINGER

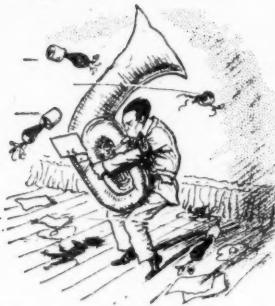
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Abdulla for all lovers of
the American style cigarette.

Fifth Avenue . 20 for 2/4
173 New Bond Street, W.1



PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCIV No. 5339

June 9 1943

Charivaria

AN American Army recruit was found to have a girth of fifty inches. Well, after all, it's a global war.

A German scientist claims to have produced synthetic steak from wood. Any chips?



"In spite of the war," says a writer, "many things continue as they have always done." In Dover, for instance, weather still goes on.

A woman writer says she remembers when price-tickets in shop windows were an indication of value. And now they are an indication of nerve.

A Serious Charge

"Cooper, our walking champion, who has won the A.A.A. five miles walking championship seven times running . . ." *Evening Standard.*

Sausages of a new type manufactured under a Ministry of Food Order were tasted by a journalist who described them as delicious. In fact they reminded him of sausages.

"What sort of jokes did our ancestors enjoy?" wonders an essayist. Doesn't he listen-in any more?

A kitten belonging to a North London man has visited every house in the street. It will probably grow up to be a bureaucrat.

A political writer observes that Herr Hitler is lying very low. On the carpet again?

"Try family cricket on the lawn this year instead of on the beach," is one suggestion. And see how keenly father fields in front of the cucumber frame.

A writer in a weekly paper mentions simple ways of decorating a table. Of course there is nothing to beat a nice large family joint.

"BRIDE wants second-hand MINCING MACHINE urgently." *Advt. in "The Times."*

Putting him through it?



A sports writer claims that he can prove golf is a Scottish invention in a few words. And the words are "Keep your eye on the ball."

It is announced that Japanese women have been ordered to go without lipstick, powder and permanent waves as a "penance" for the loss of Attu. The Japanese are very literal about losing face.

Several old steel helmets belonging to the last war have been collected in a new salvage drive. Correspondence is not invited about the number of scrapped brass-hats.



A resident of Prague is said to have murdered a Nazi official for the equivalent of twopence. Still, twopence here and twopence there soon mounts up.

One of our fighting generals is said to be so kind and peace-loving in his home-life that he wouldn't even hurt a worm. It must be charming to see him pushing the garden-roller with his batman walking in front with a red flag.

The Big Four

HERE has been a sort of swing-over of personalities to the Allied side since this war began.

Hitler and Mussolini—what names of power and portent these were in the late 'thirties! They were giants in those days. They bestrode the narrow columns of the evening papers like Colossi, and when they met on the Brenner, or in Rome, or in Munich you had to turn to the City Page to get away from them. And even there you would find that gilt-edged had fallen sharply.

Mussolini, I remember, was always interviewing people at the far end of an enormously long room, where, despite the solemnity of the surroundings, his charm of manner and ready command of the English language soon put visitors at their ease. A glass of plain water stood at his elbow.

And then Hitler and his salads. "Hitler eats little meat, and very often will take nothing but green salad and a little fruit for his evening meal. After this austere repast . . ." and so on and so on and so on.

Who cares what Hitler eats nowadays? Sometimes he is rumoured to be dead, or mad or eaten up by maggots; and sometimes Swedish doctors fly on secret errands with peculiarly-shaped forceps, according to a report in the *Afternoon Skattegat*. But it doesn't seem to matter. If they took his brain out and boiled it and put it back again the skies wouldn't fall. No statues would run blood, no flaming shield would appear in the heavens. There might be some mention of it in the Kitchen Front —nothing more.



"I'll have this special V Macaroni cheese—but without the 'V,' please."

The decline of Hitler as front-page news may be measured by Mr. Churchill's manner of referring to him. Mussolini was debunked almost from the start of Italy's war. He was a "jackal," a "lackey," he was "frisking along at Hitler's heels"—oh, many months and years ago. But for Hitler, Mr. Churchill, who does not underrate his opponents, reserved the expression "that wicked man." I do not recall his referring to him, until recently, in any other way in his broadcast speeches. But Churchill has got Hitler's measure now. He calls him Corporal Hitler, not without italics for the rank, and before long, one hopes, will be finding even less complimentary titles.

Well, the Heavenly Pair are passing, and in their place as figures of world-import stand Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin and Chiang Kai-Shek. Roosevelt of many wiles, far-darting Churchill, earth-shaker Stalin and Chiang Kai-Shek from horse-breeding China—a Homeric quartet.

What does Churchill eat? I imagine he eats pretty much what they hand him, but one ought to be sure about this kind of thing. Does Chiang like the violin? Does Stalin sleep in pyjamas or does he only wear them by day? "Perhaps," said Dr. Johnson, on an occasion when Boswell was being more than ordinarily tiresome, "we shall never know whether it is better to wear a night-cap or no," and it may be that perpetual ignorance about Stalin's pyjamas is similarly the lot reserved for humanity. But I should like to know.

When I try to set down what I do know about the personal lives and habits of the Big Four it makes a scanty list.

Churchill smokes cigars—generally (and uncharacteristically) at an angle of depression.

Roosevelt uses a cigarette-holder, at a "jaunty angle." He has also, I believe, a humidor on his desk, but I don't know what that is.

Stalin laughs immoderately at things which do not strike the Westerner as very funny. He laughed a good deal at Mr. Willkie, according to *One World*.

Chiang Kai-Shek drinks quantities of tea. (This is a guess, actually.)

Stalin has a moustache and smokes a pipe, but goodness knows what fearful kind of tobacco he puts in it. The others are clean-shaven, or, at any rate the majority of them are. I am a little dubious about Chiang's upper lip, but I swear he has no beard.

(Field-Marshal Smuts is a great world-figure and has a beard, but he doesn't come in here on account of the risk of exciting jealousy in the other Dominions and possibly also among the Field-Marshals.)

Churchill and Roosevelt both have very mobile faces. One glance at their expressions as they come out of the White House together is enough to tell newspaper correspondents that "victory in Europe first" remains the corner-stone of Allied strategy, and that the status of Bolivia after the war has been discussed. Two glances fill a column and a half.

Stalin and Chiang Kai-Shek both have impulsive faces, and for this reason do not leave conferences together, as there would be nothing in it for newspaper correspondents. Stalin drives his own tractor.

This is absolutely all I know about Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin and Chiang Kai-Shek.

But what a quartet, eh?

H. F. E.



HIDDEN TREASURE

“What we are saving may help save you.”

[London's Salvage Drive, a part of the National Salvage Campaign, is being held from June 5th to June 19th.]



"So this is Oxford, the English Detroit."

Little Talks

THREE are two significant pieces of news this morning.

Why "significant"?

Because it's the Word of the Day. You don't say: "There was no change in the weather yesterday." You say "There was no significant modification of weather conditions." Then you get a K.C.B.

Well, what's the news?

The first is that the Fried Fish World has gone all heavy. Listen to this:

"DIGNITY IN FISH AND CHIP SHOPS

The post-war aim of the National Federation of Friers, outlined by the chairman, at the opening of a three-day conference in London yesterday, is that people must be able to walk into fish-frying shops and maintain their dignity—

Oh, but don't they?

I should have thought so. I have

often bought fried fish, and I never felt that I had declined in dignity. Nobody said unkind things to me. Nobody sent me anonymous letters. I simply bought the fish and went out.

"Fish and chips" is supposed to be a bit of a joke, though.

So I gather from the chairman. And he doesn't like it. He goes on: "I hope that the use of printed paper and the music-hall jokes about it are gone, and that people will leave our shops with parcels they will all be happy to carry."

In my experience they always have been.

No. You see, it's considered degrading to have your dinner wrapped up in a leading article from *The Times*.

It may be unhealthy because of the ink and so forth. But I don't see that it's degrading. It might be taken as a sign of high culture. I'm sure if the Russians had wrapped fried fish in old newspapers

they'd have made a big thing of it: "The process of popular education is continuous. Even as the moujik conveys his simple meal of fried golopotok to his home he is able on the wrapper to read the latest bulletin from the Bureau of Cultivation and Joy."

But here, it seems, we make "music-hall jokes" about it. I think there's something in what you say. The next thing will be that the printing world will complain that the Fried Fish World is not treating them with proper respect. "Why", challenges *Times* editor, "are my leading articles considered insanitary or degrading?"

"BRITISH PAPERS FOR BRITISH CHIPS IS POST-WAR AIM OF NEWSPAPER PROPRIETORS."

Jolly good show!

What I don't follow is the bit about "music-hall jokes". I mean, why anything should be scrapped or apologized

for simply because a comedian makes a joke about it.

Mothers-in-law seem to be pretty plentiful still in spite of the jokes about them; and I can't remember meeting many shame-faced mothers-in-law.

True. The Lancashire lingo is supposed to be funny—I've never discovered why. But does the Lord Lieutenant announce: "The post-war aim of Lancashire is to end the public derision of Lancashire's ways of speech and behaviour. We shall model our speech on the B.B.C. announcers"?

On the contrary, they glory in their shame.

And there's more and more of it on the halls and the wireless. And, after all, nearly all food is a bit of a joke. What about "sausage-and-mash"?

Highly undignified. I expect the post-war aim of the sausage-makers is to secure a more reverent attitude to their honourable and useful trade.

"STATUS FOR SAUSAGES, SAYS SAUSAGE KING. 'New notions, new names', said the president yesterday. 'In future our products will be known as "Meat Cylinders".'

And the "mashed"?

"Meat Cylinders with Starch Product" will be the whole title, I think.

Then there's champagne. "Bubbly". Do you think "Bubbly" is a dignified term? I mean, could one maintain one's dignity while drinking stuff called "bubbly"?

No. But it is bubbly.

Then we shall have to take the bubbles out.

Post-war aim for Ribbentrop. What else?

I'm not sure that whelks or winkles are treated with all the solemnity they deserve.

Or the haggis.

Or tripe.

Do you suppose the tripe-purveyors have a post-war policy for higher dignity?

It will really be very tiresome if everybody has.

The poor "politician" will be asking for a square deal next.

And pawnbrokers.

Now, they have a real grievance. Did you ever hear anyone speak of a visit to a pawnbroker without some unworthy jest, or at least some subtle suggestion derogatory from the highest standard of dignity?

Can't say I did.

Yet they pursue a useful and honourable calling. They are licensed, registered and goodness knows what. The Pawnbrokers' Post-War Plan, I think, should be to eliminate all such slighting expressions as "popping it", "putting up the spout", "going to

The Merchant Navy Men

THEY know no ease, the Merchant Navy men, Not home, with the good day done,

But the high gale and the steep sea, The searing of cold and of sun; Voyage end, and voyage begun.

They may not rest; they wait in the dusk, the dawn, The flash and the tearing of steel, The ice-wrap of the cold wave, The cinders of thirst in the throat And madness that sits in the boat.

They know no help, they see these things alone; No uniform, linking in pride, Nor the hard hand and the straight brace Of discipline holding upright, But their own soul in the night.

They claim no gain, the Merchant Navy men; A wage, and the lot of the sea, The job done, and their fair name, And peace at the end of their way. They give; must we not repay?

Punch Comforts Fund, 10 Bouvierie Street, E.C.4

visit Uncle" and so on. A man should be able to pawn his watch and still maintain his dignity.

Cheers! And personally I think all the jokes about dentists are in pretty poor taste.

It's pretty difficult to maintain a sense of dignity in a dentist's chair, with a gag in one side of your mouth,

a drain-pipe in the other, your lips held open like a spiteful horse's, and a mass of gutta-percha over your upper—

I know. But I do think dentists are marvellous, don't you? I mean, the patience of it. And the way they've advanced since you and I were young. I had a nerve out the other day and never felt a thing. But do you remember the old days? First they had to kill it— that took three days or so; and then—

Don't go on, old boy. I agree most heartily. But what do you want to do about it? Are we to have no more jokes about tooth-extractions and dentists' chairs?

That, I suppose, would be the proper post-war aim of the dental world—active or passive.

I fancy dentists have a better sense of humour than some other trades. What some people don't seem to realize is that we make jokes about all our most familiar and established institutions—from the politician to the sausage.

I hope you're not putting the politician on the same plane as the sausage.

There you go again! Certainly not. Sometimes it's because we love them—like the sausage. Sometimes we may not love them, but we know they're part of the landscape—like the politician and the fried-fish shop. When we're ashamed of anything, or afraid of anything, like slums or tuberculosis, we don't make jokes about it.

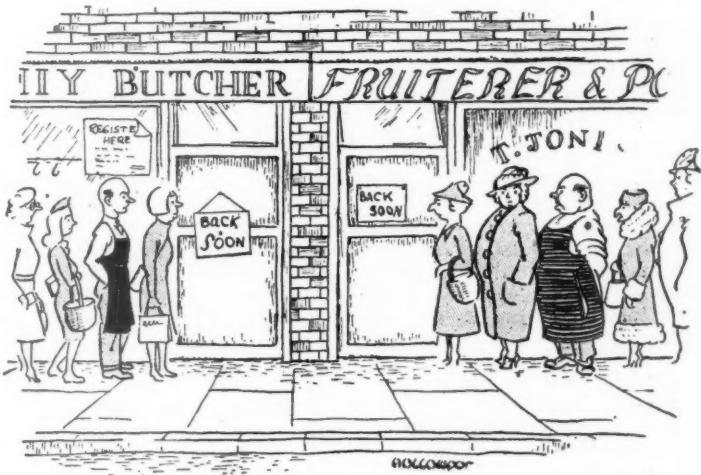
What about drunkenness?

That's a difficult one. But, as a matter of fact, there are far fewer jokes about that than there used to be—in public, anyhow. I think that proves my point.

What was your point?

I forgot.

A. P. H.



At the Pictures

DEEP WATERS

"JUST like running a ruddy bus service," observes an off-screen voice at the end of *We Dive at Dawn* (Director: ANTHONY ASQUITH), as another submarine is shown leaving for an operation such as that from which we have just seen the *Sea Tiger* successfully return. It is a fashionable journalistic attitude to the more complicated and hazardous operations of the war, and it makes an easy ending; but the assumption that such things are all in every day's work the picture itself incidentally contradicts. That ending in fact is, I think, the least satisfactory part of *We Dive at Dawn*, which is on the whole very good indeed. The idea that every submarine's crew, every time out, performs the equivalent of sinking a German battleship in the Baltic and conducting a sort of Commando raid in search of oil with which to get home, is surely not what the makers of the film meant to convey.

Otherwise the picture succeeds very well in giving an idea of the life and work of such a crew, with only a hint of the obtuseness that afflicts so many naval stories—the obtuseness that sees no high-class heroism except among the officers and finds all the comedy below the rank of sub-lieutenant. All the comedy of a particular kind, that is; admittedly JOHN MILLS as the Captain on leave, ringing up his valet to make dates for every moment of it, efficiently evokes the conventional indulgent, avuncular chuckle usually accorded to fiction's young-man-about-town. But that situation has an old-fashioned tang now (one thinks of 1918).

The merit of the film lies in its action scenes: in the extreme excitement of the shore raid, in the brilliant use of silence before the torpedoes are loosed at the battleship, in the ordered intricacy of the picture of the crew at their action-stations. Mr. MILLS, and

ERIC PORTMAN in a less usual part, are both first-rate, and there are many good "bit" players. It is also worthy of record that a lot of the lighter dialogue is funny in its own right, arousing laughter not merely because it suddenly relieves the dramatic tension.

JACK BENNY's new film, *The Meanest Man in the World* (Director: SIDNEY LANFIELD), runs for just under an hour and gives the impression of being undersized not because it grew that way but because a chunk has been cut out of it. It even seems to

them produce laughter through sheer technical ability.

Even the producers of the "Western" no longer take it seriously. *The Desperadoes* (Director: CHARLES VIDOR), though it begins in the usual pompous manner with a great splurge of Technicolored trappings, ends casually with all problems solved by a man who drives into the angry mob and calls out the solution at the top of his voice—So-and-So was the real villain, these fellows are all right, and stand clear for the happy ending. It is as if the makers of the film were disinclined to continue going through the old motions, after an hour and a half of it—for there is almost nothing in all this that we have not seen before.

In Technicolor, nevertheless, and well done, it is quite worth seeing again. There are one or two scenes that seemed to me very attractive, particularly those involving horses and men looked down on from a height. There is an attempt at the beginning to pretend that the plot hinges on the picturesque fact that Utah's wild horses were being sold to the Army in 1863, and indeed they are dragged in, or stamped in, for the hero's benefit towards the end. But in the main the story is the good old Western, much of it going on in the good old Western town street, or the

good old Western saloon where the comic bartender fears with such good reason for his glassware. Among the competent type-players are CLAIRE TREVOR as the "Countess," RANDOLPH SCOTT as the Sheriff, GLENN FORD as the good-bad young man; and EDGAR BUCHANAN is excellent as that rarer type, the kindly old rogue. But I'm not sure of the attraction of all this without the colour.

R. M.



[*We Dive at Dawn*]

SUPER-MARINE VIEW

Lieut. Taylor, R.N. JOHN MILLS

me that I can detect where such a cut was made: the kind-hearted lawyer's jump from poverty to opulence as soon as he takes to being "mean" (in the American sense) seems very sudden indeed, and some of the less quick-witted of us take several moments to grasp it. Anyway, the piece is a cheerful little farce, basically one of those Good-heavens-she-mustn't-find-out stories, rather stagey, with a heavy, father in the offing (compare *Charley's Aunt*, in a version of which Mr. BENNY was recently bogged), but brightly presented and with some good amusing lines apart from those less inspired ones with which the invaluable ROCHESTER and Mr. BENNY between

From a notice on the Emergency Water Supply Tank in Berkeley Square: "Nearest E.W.S. Bath Club."

Saturday nights excepted?

Patriotism Is Not Enough.

I KNEW a man (let me call him Jones—his real name was less euphonious) who held queer ideas about the national effort. He confessed that all his actions ran counter to the general conception of patriotism, but claimed that they could be justified by logical analysis. After three years of war he travelled unnecessarily, talked carelessly, exceeded his fuel target, contributed nothing to National Savings and refused to allow his wife to dig for victory. We live in a democracy in which even the smallest minority has a right to be heard. Jones was such a minority.

"Of course I travel unnecessarily," he said when I questioned him. "If you knew the first thing about railway costing you would know that empty seats are a dead loss. Services are severely restricted, of course, but so unpredictable are the demands for accommodation that trains are still to be found which are short of their complement of passengers. Thus by unnecessary travel I am (1) contributing to the finances of the State, (2) helping the trains to run smoothly and with a minimum of depreciation by the careful distribution of my weight, and (3) consuming food in refreshment buffets which would otherwise impair the efficiency of the fighting Forces. When I add that I make a practice of testing penny-in-the-slot machines to make sure that nothing of value has been overlooked you will see that my action, superficially selfish, is in reality the noblest form of patriotism."

"What about not digging for victory?" I asked.

"It is purely psychological," he replied. "The English will work like Trojans if they are made to feel slightly superior. Now, everybody in Longmore Drive digs wholeheartedly for victory because my lawn is still there as a constant reminder of his or her sacrifice. I have only to appear in my garden to lure my neighbours from their Sunday siesta. They will work with phenomenal zeal in order to show me that they think I am lower than a skunk. I am convinced that the food-stuffs production of Longmore Drive would decline rapidly if I shared in it."

"That's all very well," I said, "but you can't possibly defend careless talk."

"No?" he said superciliously. "Have you ever heard any careless talk? Of course you have not. Not one in a thousand has. There is so little careless



talk that most people have the 'It can't happen here' complex and would not recognize the real thing if it came along. Now, I know no military secrets but I have an inventive brain. I should say that the good I do is enormous. Since 1939 I must have put half a million people on their mettle."

"Well, what about savings?" I ventured. "Surely it is everybody's duty to lend what he can to the Government!"

"True," he said, "but not everybody does. The voluntary principle is inadequate in modern war. We conscript men, women, profits, salvage and property, but we leave money to costly appeals. Now, sooner or later the

Government will hear of my delinquency and will adopt compulsory measures to obtain my money. Then I shall have achieved my object and the nation as a whole will benefit. Far from being unpatriotic, I am actually depriving myself of interest on my capital which you as a tax-payer would one day have to meet, while I as a tax-payer bear my full share of the National Debt."

This conversation took place no more than a month ago. Jones would, I know, have wished me to report his views and place them on record. His end was unworthy of the man. It was untidy. You see, Jones believed to the last that by not queueing for buses he was helping to preserve what he called "Freedom from Authoritarianism." I shall never pass the Lymehurst bus-stop without thinking of him and of the awful fury of women scorned.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

J.W.TAYLOR



"My dear girl, when you've been in the Home Guard as long as I have . . ."

The Phoney Phleet

XXII—H.M.S. "Permanens"

TN peace-time *Désirée L'Amour* (Mr. and Mrs. Albert Brewer) Sold ladies' lingerie in Hull. Though profitable, this was dull—At least for Albert. Therefore when The Navy said it wanted men To cope with Adolf H. and Co. Bert Brewer was the first to go. They found, however, that his chest, Whether distended or compressed, Was half the size it ought to be; And so he didn't go to sea But had to do a job on shore Keeping the underclothing store (Appropriately enough) for Wrens Administered by "Permanens" The naval base at Stoke-on-Trent.

You can imagine what it meant To his adventure-hungry mind— Cribbed, *not* cabined, but confined; Denied his maritime romance Behind a prison-wall of pants. Moreover, as you'll understand, The more his body dwelt on land The more his soul winged out to sea.

He gradually came to be More naval than the Navy. When Handing some garment to a Wren He'd use his finest navalese: "Ahoy there! Ship a pair of these! They're just your tally—square-rig neck. Avast! You'll drop 'em on the deck!" And so on. He adopted weird Archaic swear-words, grew a beard, Gave up his watch and bought a bell And struck it frequently to tell

What time it was. At much expense He made his landlady dispense A daily tot of rum. His bed Was never slept in, but instead He slung a hammock in the hall On hooks secured to what he'd call The after galley-bulkhead.

Well, This sort of thing began to tell, Not only on his friends but him. From being just a pleasant whim It grew to dominate his life Until at last he wrote his wife To say that he was now afloat; And he believed it.

His next note Informed her that he wasn't well— The sea had a persistent swell Around those parts, and he was sick. His wife thought this a bit too thick; She batted off to Stoke-on-Trent To find out what the whole thing meant: And there, believe you me (or not), It turned out that it *wasn't* rot. Auto-suggestion—what you will— Had made the fellow really ill, With symptoms and effects that were The same as chronic mal-de-mer.

So it went on. Each day he grew Weaker and worse. What *could* they do? The finest surgeons in the base (Even Commanders) found the case Beyond their skill, and so advised That he be psycho-analysed (Which meant that it had got them beat). They took him up to Harley Street And there a certain Dr. Pry Asked Bert the how and what and why Of all he'd thought, done, dreamt or said Since he was born till he was dead Or thereabouts.

Each cosy chat Soaked Albert for five guineas that He couldn't well afford: but then Such trifles were forgotten when The Pry announced to Mrs. Brewer "Madam, we may prescribe a cure. Since Bert is seasick on the land He will, as you can understand, Be perfectly O.K. at sea. Yes! Vice versa! Q.E.D."

The Admiralty, always kind, Was good enough to change its mind About his chest; so, one fine morn Albert at last was water-borne. It worked exactly as friend Pry Had said it would; I can't think why, But there it was—the worse the storm The closer Bert approached the norm. In fact the only snag I know Was that he simply couldn't go Ashore at all, it made him ill.

He's knocking round the ocean still And, though his missus finds it grim, That can't be helped—it's good for him.

H. J. Talking

ONCE lost most of my money through investing it in a rabbit-farm; we found that the rabbits increased so quickly we could not build hutches fast enough and no one much was wanting to buy them as they said they could always catch wild ones to eat. The kind we bought had very long hair and this was an awful nuisance as it was always coming out, so we kept them clean-shaven, and the dustman refused to take the hair away unless bribed. To try to earn some money I went out into the streets and began by entertaining queues. At first I gave humorous recitations and walked on my hands, but the queue, which was waiting, as it turned out, to get into a Moral Welfare Conference at the Albert Hall, was not amused. For my next queue I sobered down and did a few simple experiments, like making hydrogen and determining the specific gravity of zinc, but this queue was headed for the Holborn Empire and was as unresponsive as the previous one. I then became a pavement artist. There were so many of these, however, that I turned to pavement sculpture, specializing in bas-relief, which caused trouble with the police as people fell over my work in the dark. Many seemed to gather crowds by selling toys and working models, and I hastily constructed some bulldogs so true to life that their teeth were guaranteed to draw blood; but here, too, objections were raised, and as a last effort I offered to predict the weather for the day, but as I could work at this time only in the late evenings there was not much weather left to predict.

In some ways all this gave me valuable experience which I was able to turn to good account when I went into films. A company had been formed to produce features of scientific interest, and the Board—which numbered some scores of financiers, clergymen and retired diplomats—thought it would be as well to have one scientist to assist it, and co-opted by them is what I was. After two years' discussion they had decided to make a one-reel film on the life of the slug, the cast being cheap and the subject one of general interest to those with gardens. At this stage I made my appearance and was given instructions to carry on with the production of this feature, the attention of the Board being for the time distracted by complicated negotiations with a Mr. Isaacstein who, they alleged, was trying to absorb them, though this seemed unlikely to anyone who knew them personally.

It at once struck me that what was needed was a soprano, these being the making of almost any film, and I hired one from some agents who dealt in such. To give unity to the film, which I increased to six reels, I made it so that the soprano was always finding slugs in her salad and burst into song on so doing. B. Smith then contributed handsomely to the enterprise by producing a very fine photographic trick: a regiment of cavalry appeared to be shone through by X-rays so that only their bones appeared, and in order to introduce this I made the period of the film the Civil War and the soprano was to be Henrietta Maria, this giving her the opportunity to sing with a foreign accent, which was just as well. The casting of Cromwell proved difficult as many actors refused to wear a wart, tenors, which we really wanted, being particularly careful of their appearance, so eventually we had to engage a bass. The problem then arose of Milton. He had to come in somewhere, as all famous people living at a particular time are held to be included in an historical film, but it did not seem a suitable part for the acrobatic comedian the agent had made us take with the soprano, and in the end we had him speak

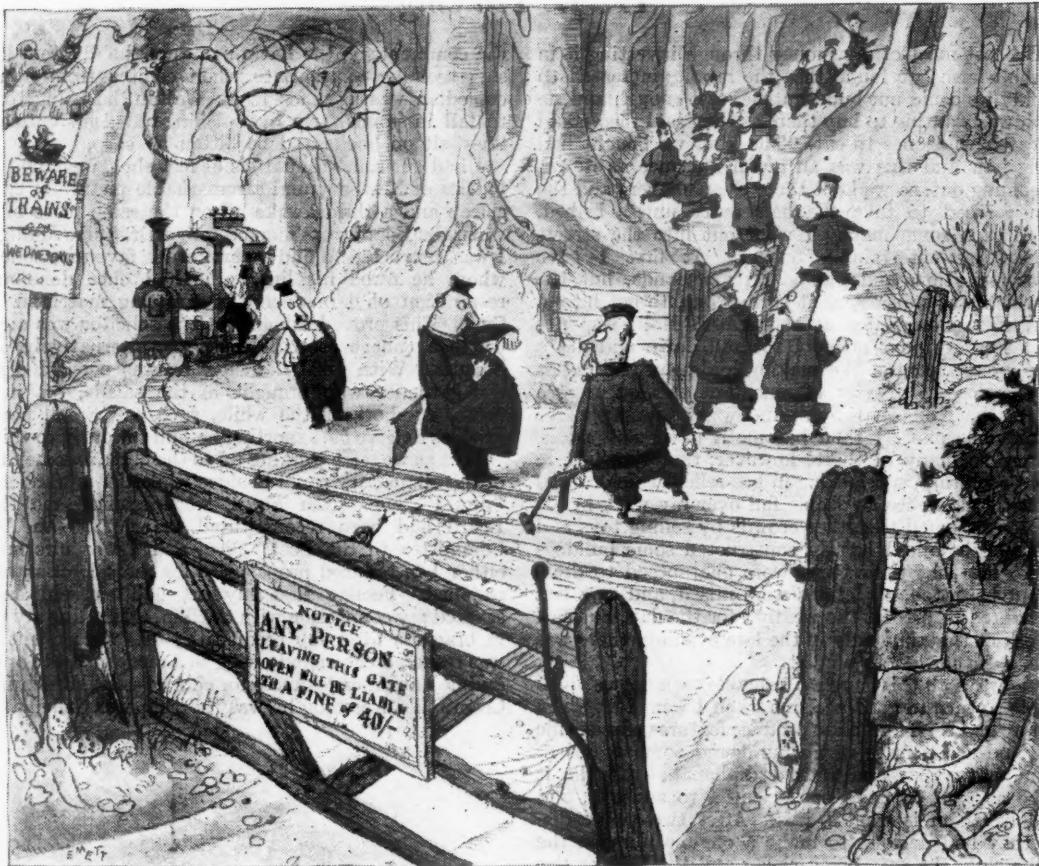
the commentary, the Latin names of the different kinds of slug seeming appropriate when coming from him. The comedian was used for Izaak Walton, he being thus able to fall in ponds, trip over fishing-rods, get entangled in lines, sit on hooks and be bitten by carp.

I had got some thousands of feet shot, including several battles of Newbury and a remarkable picture of two slugs asleep and a third awake all on the same piece of celery, when the Board were merged into a Dr. Spike Mulligan and I was instructed to find a part for his favourite solicitor, to whom he owed his life as he had once done artificial respiration on him during a garrotting match in Denver City. This proved difficult as the solicitor was ambitious to do a college football coach or, alternatively, Johann Strauss. With great difficulty he was persuaded to play the gardener who brought in the salads, making salty peasant aphorisms the while, such as "Small hedgepig's prickles do give gert snorting he-bull furiously to think."

Just as we were working up to the climax, some diagrams of the alimentary canal in slugs while the soprano sang the "Jewel Song" from *Faust*, word reached me that the Board had been reconstituted in error as an Advisory Committee to the Post Office, and I was informed that either I introduced propaganda for the sale of stamps or I resigned. Feeling that my art had suffered enough I severed my connection with the film, explaining my position in brackets after my credit-title. Its subsequent history was rather chequered owing to a receiver being appointed and he having a weakness for chariot-races, which involved Cromwell's dreaming he was the Emperor Caligula.



"Put down 'E.W.S. 172: brackish'."



"I makes it a fine of five 'undred and twenty shillings."

The Last Bath-Chair

(A Southern health resort reports the disappearance of its last bath-chair, owing to the loss of the visitor trade.)

OURS was a town of highest reputation,
Famous for its sunshine, noted for the view;
Here came the wrecks who sought recuperation,
Snuffed up the ozone and blossomed forth anew.

Victims of liver, aged and convalescent
Crowded to the hotels fronting the Parade,
Thronged our apartments, mainly in The Crescent,
Benefited greatly and liberally paid.

Bath-chairs, bath-chairs, plying where the sun shone,
Up and down the sea-front plodded to and fro;
Hour long and day long bar a pause for luncheon,
Battened on the stranger, for ever on the go.

Then came the slump. To-day the climate braces
Vainly, our attractions advertise in vain;

All, all are gone, the old familiar faces;
Empty are the car-parks and no one comes by train.

Bath-chairs, bath-chairs, baffled of their freightage,
One by one have vanished, nobody knows where;
This to the last, a specimen of great age,
Hung about the bandstand and never found a fare.

Must it be lost, our veteran survivor?
No, in our museum let it find a place.
Would we could add the figure of its driver
With his ancient bowler and pimples on his face.

There shall it rest, its own and best memorial,
And in better times when its patrons reappear
Sick, convalescent, liverish and hoary'll
Seek it on their flat feet and drop a silent tear.

DUM-DUM.



EVEN-HANDED JUSTICE

“We but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague th’ inventor.”—*Macbeth: Act I. Sc. 7.*

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, June 1st.—House of Lords:
A Discovery.

House of Commons: Civilities on Civil Flying.

Wednesday, June 2nd.—House of Commons: Finance Bill in Committee.

Thursday, June 3rd.—House of Commons: As above.

Tuesday, June 1st.—A notable day. Notable, curiously enough, because Parliament heard three remarkable speeches made—contrary to modern practice—without notes.

Two of the speeches were made by newcomers to Parliament, the other by an Old Parliamentary Hand. The newcomers were Lord MORAN, the Prime Minister's doctor, and Group Captain HELMORE, Watford's new Conservative M.P. The O.P.H. was Mr. LESLIE HORE-BELISHA, who, after years of notes, has flung them aside and become an extempore orator.

The absence of notes may seem a small thing. Actually, if generally followed, it means a new lease of life for Parliament, which has been in some danger of becoming a professional

the salutes of all who venerate Parliament.

The contribution of Lord MORAN to the debate in the House of Lords on the part of the doctor in the Beveridge Plan showed that that House had gained a very remarkable recruit and a man of wide knowledge and kindly human understanding of the under-dog. And, moreover, a man with one of the pleasantest voices heard in that Chamber for many a long year.

With never a pause or hesitation Lord MORAN stood up and spoke up, arguing clearly and forcefully for what he called his life's greatest ambition—health-centres at which doctors might regain the self-critical atmosphere of their hospital student days, and where they might consult and work together for the good of all mankind.

Over in the Commons Group Captain HELMORE was offering a few observations on the subject of civil flying. He, too, has a mellifluous voice, which he uses with skill and artistry. He reminded the House—which was discussing the whole future of civil aviation and Britain's part in that future—that the gallant young men who are now doing their bit to save our civilization will, when peace comes once more, be able to fly and land our air-liners with the same skill. They had conquered the air as well as the foe, and they could make us the greatest air-faring, as well as the greatest sea-faring, race. They could make us the world's transporters in the air as on the sea.

That was all. Simple, straightforward, direct, as all true oratory surely should be. But it "got" the House.

The debate was opened by Mr. W. R. D. PERKINS, who used to appear in the House in the uniform of a Sergeant-Pilot of the R.A.F., and, before that, was an airman on his own account. He asked that Britain's place in the air should be made secure by the exercise of a little imagination by the Government. He urged the Government to call the Empire into conference over the plans to be made, as it would be useless to frame them in Splendid Isolation.

He wanted the clever designers of war-planes to turn their attention soon to peace-planes. To beat their bomb-racks into luggage-grids, in fact.

So earnest was Mr. PERKINS that even his reference to the Air Minister pouring soothing-syrup on the troubled waters received no more than a passing roar of laughter.

Mr. RONALD TREE, whose lips, so long sealed by reason of his honorary

membership of the Ministry of Information staff, can frame very telling speeches, and who has always "flown everywhere," wants us to have a



CIVIL AVIATION

Mr. Perkins's programme

post-war air service second to none in speed, comfort and general efficiency. We could (said he in effect) best knit the Empire together by refraining from being woolly in our plans.

Mrs. MAVIS TATE, herself a pilot, generously gave blushing Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR, the Air Minister, "the air." He had not the glimmerings of conception of the importance of civil aviation, she said sweetly, and was entirely immersed in theoretical propositions which had no reality.

Mr. ATTLEE told the House that the Government was already consulting the Dominions and India about the future of civil flying. Members were able to contain the excitement Mr. ATTLEE's speech aroused in them—even when, believe it or not, he announced that "There's a war on!"

Mr. FRED MONTAGUE is a combative Member of the Opposition, and he startled the House (which had listened to a long list of things British aviation, as at present planned, could not do) by announcing that for his part civil flying could go to hell.

Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR, optimist as he is, shook his head sadly, as if to announce that that tropical clime could not be included even in the most ambitious British Airways itinerary.

Then Mr. HORE-BELISHA spoke. It



CIVIL AVIATION

Sir Archibald Sinclair's policy

audience to speeches read by those who had the industry (or the secretaries) to prepare them.

So the Noteless Three have earned



"I hear Pompeii got it yesterday."

was a speech full of thought—and one that gained for him loud cheers from throats that seldom applauded him before. He foresaw that, in the future, air-power would be as decisive in making and breaking nations as sea-power had been in the past. He forecast for Britain a greatness beyond anything she had achieved before, a leadership of the world in the marvellous age to come.

It was a longish speech, but never once did Mr. HORE-BELISHA refer to his notes—for the excellent reason that he had none.

But Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR made up for Mr. HORE-BELISHA, Group Captain HELMORE and Lord MORAN. He had a pile of notes that, placed end to end, would have reached over to the Air Ministry itself. Sir ARCHIBALD is an orator of what is known as the "old school," and he certainly orated. He spoke energetically—almost acrobatically—for an hour.

Wednesday, June 2nd.—There was a time—there were, indeed, many times—when the Committee stage of the Finance Bill took fourteen or fifteen days. This year's Finance Bill, which disposes of the biggest sum ever handled in a single Bill, was given two days.

And Sir KINGSLEY WOOD smiled a kind of friendly smile and curled up on the Treasury Bench, although it was clear that (unlike those geologists who smiled the original smiles) he was much interested in the subsequent proceedings.

Sir DAVID MAXWELL-FYFE, the Solicitor-General, startled the House a little by revealing what appeared to be a deep-laid scheme to evade the spirit (the very word) of the law, if not its letter. Apparently there are gentry who buy their own highly-valuable whisky at some nominal price and then sell it again at some anything-but-nominal price. By this means, it seems, they can evade Excess Profits Tax, and generally play Old Harry with the Exchequer.

So there is to be a special clause in the new Finance Act to circumvent this little scheme and prevent the ill-gotten gains from going into the pockets of the schemers. Instead, it is hoped, a goodly portion of it will go into the nation's coffers. Which seems poetic justice.

But Lord WINTERTON, Sir HERBERT WILLIAMS and others, ever-watchful over the interests of justice as they are, were anxious to ensure that the

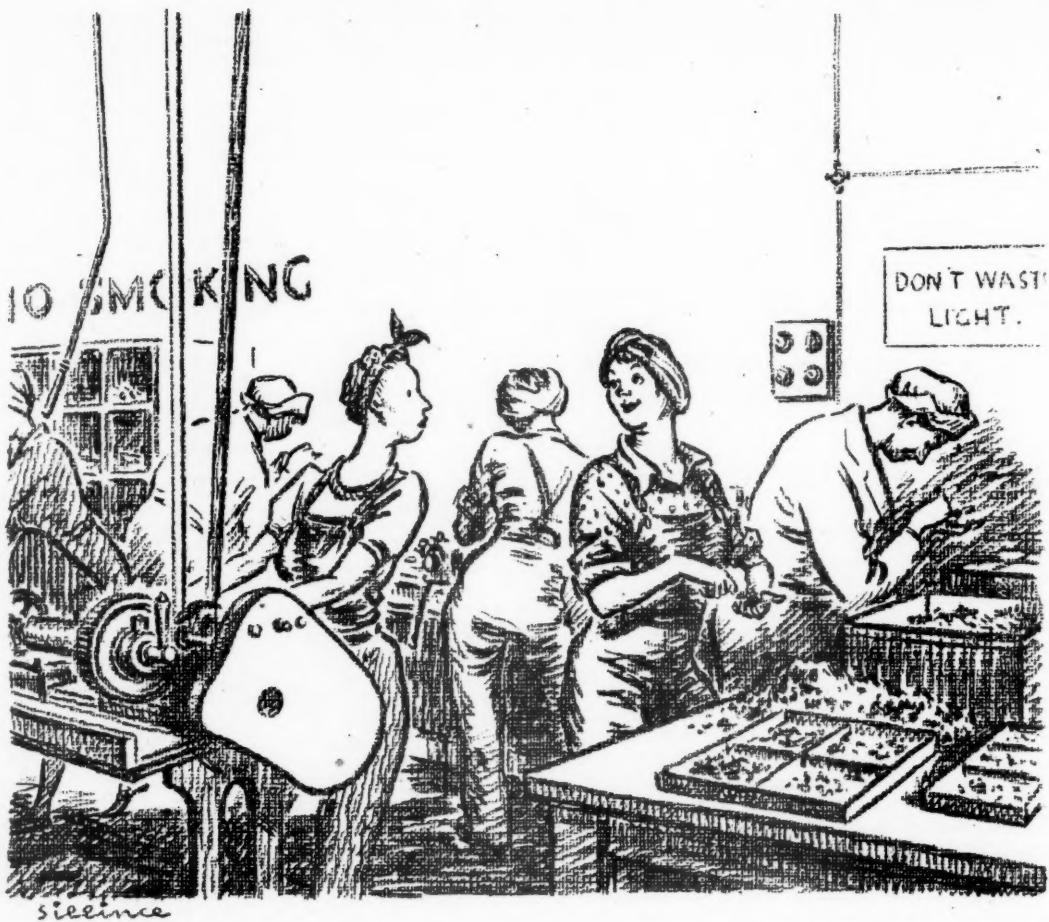
innocent did not suffer at all and that even the guilty did not suffer out of proportion to their crime.

Mr. Solicitor—backed by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer—promised that justice should prevail though the Treasury receipts fell, and the matter dropped.

Mr. A. V. ALEXANDER, the First Lord of the Admiralty, made a personal appearance to tell the House that the U-boat menace was well on the way to solution—or whatever one does with a menace. Sinkings (or "killings" as the First Lord, more ominously, calls them) have risen sharply. Sinkings of U-boats, that is. Sinkings by U-boats have fallen at least as sharply. The House cheered the best news it has received since the victories in North Africa. In some ways, perhaps, the biggest news ever.

Thursday, June 3rd.—Mr. RUPERT DE LA BERE scored to-day. Given an "official" reply to a question, he asked: "Am I to understand that every avenue is being explored, every relevant consideration being taken into account?"

This neat raid on the enemy's ammunition-dump of official clichés pleased everybody.



"I'm not here all day—I have to go and do part-time housework."

As Others Hear Us Now

WELL, I won't deny that I'm very pleased about Tunisia. I always said that a smashing victory in Tunisia was what was wanted."

"I entirely agree, mother. Now the question is, what next?"

"What next?" My dear child, the question is perfectly simple. What I say is—"

"What I say is—"

"All right, Aunt Agatha, I'm sorry."

"No, no, I'm sorry."

"Well, all I mean is that the next thing must simply be the invasion of Europe."

"My dear, you've taken the very words out of my mouth."

"Well, mother and Aunt Agatha, I must say I think you're both absolutely right. Open a second front is what I've said all along."

"That's right."

"There's only one way of doing it successfully: *through the Balkans*. Now, you take the Balkans—"

"But darling, before we actually take the Balkans—I don't want to contradict you in any way, but you're wrong about the Balkans. We've got to invade through Holland. I'm perfectly sure we've got to, and I definitely say *Holland*."

"Mother, I see exactly what you mean, and it's a perfectly natural mistake. But Holland's no good. Absolutely no good at all."

"Mary and Aunt Agatha, I wish you'd sit down. I could get at the sink if only you'd sit down. And what about invading through France, like Dad's always said?"

"Too obvious, my dear. You may be sure they've thought of that. What we want to do is to take them completely by surprise."

"Yes, I can see that. Well, there's the toe of Italy. Carry right on from there, I should."

"Ah, that's a bit too straightforward. Mind you, I don't say I haven't considered it, but I've decided against it."

"Aunt Agatha, I'm certain there's one thing you haven't taken into account. It ought to be possible,

between one thing and another, to invade from two or three points at one and the same time. You see my idea? Harass them a bit by keeping them moving from place to place."

"I think perhaps you're right."

"The Russians are all for us opening a second front on the Continent. That I do know."

"But there's another thing. Whatever we're going to do we ought to do it pretty quickly, is what I say."

"That's right."

"In my opinion, therefore, we might do a lot worse than begin with a parachute-landing on a large scale in Norway."

"Norway, Aunt Agatha?"

"I may be wrong, but I've fancied Norway all along. We've got to take the geographical element into account, quite definitely. I don't want to be too fussy about it all, but that's the way I look at it."

"There's something in what you're saying, I know, only do please keep away from between me and the roller-towel. Yes. Well, I'm all for a second front myself, and I'm sure I've said so times out of number."

"Well, you'd better be careful where you say it. We don't want the whole thing to get round, now do we? The element of surprise is half the battle."

"That's right."

"I can't help feeling that airborne troops would be a surprise for them. You know—just landing unexpectedly."

"Well, I still say that Holland is the very last place in which they're going to look for an invasion party. And it's nice and flat too."

"Holland may be all right. On the other hand, we've got to remember that France is nearer. I sometimes feel like giving my vote for France, upon my word I do."

"I don't say you're wrong, Aunt Agatha. But whatever's decided we have got to move quickly. I've said so all along, and I still say so."

"I definitely agree. And I believe Dad does too, unless I'm greatly mistaken."

"No, that's okay. Strike now is what Dad says—and has been saying for months."

"Then that settles that."

"Though I'm sure there are things to be taken into consideration. The tides, for one thing."

"Ah, the tides. Well, those have to be worked out. I wouldn't understand about those."

"Neither would I. But I'd never be surprised if it turned out to be the ninth of June."

"Neither would I. In fact, I've said the second week in June all along."

"Besides, the ninth is Dad's birthday." E. M. D.

Public Opinion

AUCHTERBROSE,
SCOTLAND.

Friday

To Mr Spout M P

EAR SIR,—This is Mrs Dusty Mrs Pilkie and Mrs McSumph writing with regards to the Beveridge Report which you asked us for the conditions of public opinion about. We done a full canvass down both sides of the High Street as far as old Mrs Slatts. Of course nobody has read it. But most is in favour. So prospects good. But natural one or two doubtfuls and some with complete ignorance. For instance old Mrs Slatts said she had not heard as much reports for the last day or two. But she was likely meaning the guns practising behind the wood. And we will tell you what some of the doubtful ones is thinking so you will be warned what to say in your speeches.

Mrs Green at 42 said she had heard there was nothing in it against the flues in the Council houses which smokes with every wind that blows. Consequent she would not have nothing to do with the Report unless otherwise confirmed.

You will need to go canny if Mrs Squibs is at the meeting. She wants to know if you and Sir William Beveridge has heard about the widow through the wall that is going boasting about getting more pension. Money down the drain says Mrs Squibs is nothing to it. But we think maybe a wee kind word for them with weak stomachs might turn this one.

Mrs Craw is definite doubtful. No promise will I give says she one way or the tother except it is down in black-and-white. Quite ratty she was. The ruin of this country says she is spouters that will not put it down in black-and-white.

And mind you Mr Spout M P we called on old Andra Carpy as well that never agrees with nobody and snaps your nose off. Prepared for trouble we was. But he just blew out his moustache at us and slammed the door. We think you should put him down as definite against.

Wee Miss Pert and Mrs McTurk was simply fuming with Willie Flesh the butcher. Miss Pert said he sold a tongue to another that she had

definite trysted for herself and the same with her ox-tail the week before. And Mrs McTurk said his offals selections was a perfect scandal. And that's your Beveridge Report for you says she. But no doubt there is nothing can be done with such as them two. It is only a case of any stick for they are that ignorant.

Well we went next to Willie Flesh. And he looked something awful. He told us we was not to worry about him because he was likely going to the asylum next week.

But the one that we was the most put about was Mrs Windy. Maybe you will mind her. She is the wife of Parlane Windy the grocer. For to let you understand. About ten years since Parlane got into the Town Council and then he was made chairman of the gasworks. Well from that day to this without a word of a lie he has never done a hands turn in the shop. He just goes about making speeches about the gasworks. Leaves everything to his wife. Many a time has yon poor woman said to us I thought I was marrying a provision merchant but its turned out a gasometer. Well when we asked her about the Beveridge Report she looked at us something pitiful. It is to give more pension to widows says she. But what about me says she that is far worse than a widow. Widows is left alone says she but I have still got him about the house to feed and wont even count the coupons. Do you know it was right pitiful Mr Spout M P and we was wondering if nothing could be done for such pitiful cases.

However these is just samples of one or two flies in the ointment the most being in favour as we told you before. So here is wishing all success for the Beveridge Report with kind regards.

Yours most respectful

MARTHA DUSTY (Mrs)

MARY PILKIE (Mrs)

HELEN MCSUMPH (Mrs)

P.S.—We near forgot to tell you this. Old Mrs String said she would not promise her vote except Sir William Beveridge comes down here to see about them dust-bins. She means them being left standing in the middle of the pavement in the black-out for people to tumble over and get their legs broke. Which she done it herself twice. But of course she never broke her legs.

• •

Van Beethoven and his Boys

"The swing quartet of a British aircraft factory then take over for fifteen minutes." Radio programme notes.

At the Play

"THE IMAGINARY INVALID"
(WESTMINSTER)
"CASE 27, V.C." (COMEDY)

WHAT is it that it is—as the French themselves say—that makes the great comedies of their MOLIÈRE so dryly intractable in English? Before we examine the question let us say at once that Mr. DONALD WOLFIT's company, now settling at the Westminster with a new programme of MOLIÈRE and IBSEN, gives a much better performance than one might reasonably expect from a Shakespearean repertory troupe. *Argan* is even more remotely removed from *Malvolio* than *Toine*, the ancient malingerer's brisk serving-maid, is from *Maria*. Praise as well as gratefulness is therefore due to this brave company for its elasticity as well as its enterprise.

Mr. WOLFIT's *Argan* one would even describe as one of his best things. He has a wonder-making, dusty, sour, pasty, crabbed make-up. He is credibly antique and cantankerous. His cheeks and his pate are riddled with years. His eyes, like those of the old men in *Hamlet*'s satirical author, purge thick amber and plum-tree gum. He is full of wheezes and grunts and tetchiness. He very nearly comes to life. That he does not is the fault solely of MOLIÈRE, who designed the part for a great comedian and expired while playing it himself. (We have no

great comedians in England in these times—only clever and resourceful ones like Mr. WOLFIT.) *Argan* is not one of the supreme rôles like *Jourdain* or *Tartuffe*. It is, like *Harpagon* in *L'Avare*, something more monotonous, one-track, and in a way more difficult. In the great parts MOLIÈRE gives the actor a house to dwell in and demands only the right inhabitant. In these lesser masterpieces the poor actor is given only a pile of bricks and has to set about building his part with the rise of the curtain. Mr. WOLFIT (the next piece on his list is, by the way, *The Master Builder*) builds efficiently and with considerable effect.

The best scene in the play is the final one where the old rogue pretends to be dead at last, and hears first his wife utter cries of sincere relief, and then his daughter express genuine regrets. The episode is arranged by *Toine*, and Miss ROSALIND IDEN brings some style and sparkle to her mischief. Miss ADZA VINCENT, too, has a handsome authority as the two-faced wife, and Mr. PETER JONES as the daughter's stupid suitor *Diafoirus* contrives a remarkable piece of smiling vacuity. (What an *Aguecheek* is in this young actor! Has he played it?)

well as both fun and style, fails to make English-seeming plays out of Molière's high comedies, and it should be borne in mind that he fails in the not undistinguished company of Dryden, Vanbrugh, Wycherley, Colley Cibber and Henry Fielding.

Wycherley, for example, took *Le Misanthrope* and adapted it far more freely than F. Anstey has adapted *Le Malade Imaginaire*. He even gave the characters English Restoration-play names like *Manly* and *Novel* and *Major Oldfox* and *Lord Plausible* and *Olivia* (for *Célimène*!) and the *Widow Blackacre*. But does one think of Wycherley to-day because of *The Plain Dealer*, as he called it? One does not. All the same we may here have an exception to the rule we have laboriously been laying down. *The Plain Dealer* was popular for a hundred years. This may or may not have been because it does not even pretend to be French. Let Mr. WOLFIT consider *Manly*—“of an honest, surly, nice humour” the adapter calls him—when he requires another part.



BACKING A LOSER

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Dr. Diafoirus | MR. ERIC ADENEY |
| Polidor Argan | MR. DONALD WOLFIT |
| Thomas | MR. PETER JONES |
| Angelique | MISS JOAN PEART |

The production is in other aspects well-ordered, and its pace is speedy.

Yet is there any point in disguising that it is largely unavailing, excepting to enthusiasts? Is anything to be done with Molière in English? Could Mr. Gielgud breathe poetic life into an English *Alceste*, or Mr. Laughton re-animate a *Tartuffe* in translation? The present actor's strenuous and admirable effort makes us doubt whether anybody will ever achieve such a feat, and it is significant that no English actor ever has in the past. The plays are French, and French they must remain. Even “F. Anstey,” who had great gifts as a translator as

da, and then collapsed himself. After that he lost his memory, imagined himself to be a twelfth-century Spanish saint, worked miracles, and was employed by an unscrupulous psychiatrist. After many further adventures, he recovered his memory and said he was going to redeem the world.

The piece is earnestly acted by the Rock Players, who really must be told that their extreme deliberation in delivery would ruin the effect of far clearer plays than this one. They are refreshingly audible, but they are also much too slow. In the theatre it is the lack of pace that kills.

A. D.

The Driver

LIEUTENANT Sympson's attempts to learn Swahili, and thus be able to talk to our African Pioneers on equal terms, are at last beginning to bear fruit. He asked the mess waiter for another cup of tea yesterday and got it. He even told Butasindi Wabongo, the corporal cook, to serve breakfast half an hour later on Sunday, and got near enough to have it served half an hour earlier.

It was perhaps because of this run of success that Sympson had such an unfortunate experience with Driver Gerosomo Buckhandula (son of Koko) last night. The 115th Sanitary Dispersal Unit of the R.A.S.C. had borrowed four of our East Africans to form a guard over a Secret Disinfectant Dump, the exact location of which, for reasons of security, cannot be mentioned here, but which lay on the other side of Cairo from our camp.

Lieutenant Sympson called Driver Gerosomo to him. "Gerosomo, old boy," he said, "to-night we will quenda (go) to inspectioni guardi disinfectioni uko-o-o-o."

Uko means "over there" and if the place indicated is a long distance away you yodel it, which Sympson did so effectively that the Orderly Sergeant, Wanyama Odumu, turned out our Camp Guard.

Sympson, who had been trying all day to get Wanyama to turn out the Camp Guard, without success, seized the opportunity to inspect them, and then set off with Driver Gerosomo for the Disinfectant Dump. Major Fibbing, who is a realist, had tried to persuade Sympson to take an interpreter with him, but Sympson seemed so deeply offended at the idea that the Major gave way.

"We go through Cairo," said Sympson when they started, "and then carry straight on till we get to a cross-roads." He said this in what he supposed to be Swahili, and Driver Gerosomo nodded.

They got to Cairo without much difficulty, and then, quite suddenly, Gerosomo stopped outside a cinema.

"Why," asked Sympson, "stop outside a cinema?"

"Thank you," said Driver Gerosomo, and got out of the car and disappeared into the cinema.

The next two hours, Sympson says, were among the most exasperating of his whole life. His natural instinct to follow Driver Gerosomo into the cinema and drag him back to the car was thwarted by two considerations. Firstly, if he left the car unattended it



"Nominal roll and butter, please."

would certainly be stolen. Secondly, he would have no chance of finding Gerosomo in the dark cinema, and as he knew no Arabic he would not be able to ask the management to flash a notice on the screen saying that Driver Gerosomo was urgently required at the box-office.

So he just waited, trying to solace himself with thoughts of what Gerosomo would suffer in the Orderly Room next day, and in the end the driver just came out, thanked him again, and drove off.

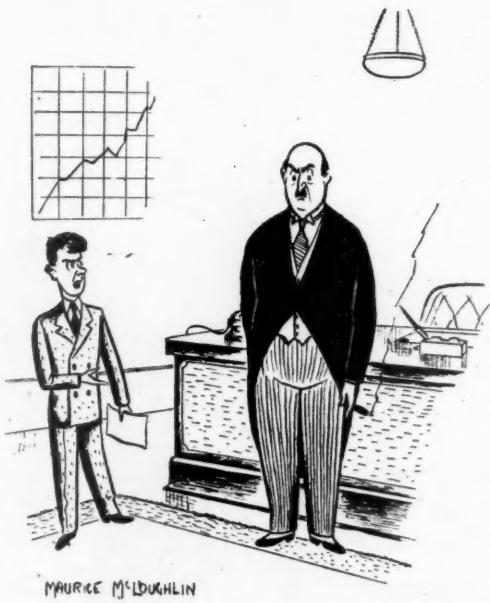
They found the Disinfectant Guard at last, and Sympson tried to make them fall in to be inspected, in a neat row like the C.S.M. does back in camp, but Gerosomo took a big bag of monkey-nuts from his pocket and

started handing them round, and when Sympson tried to protest in Swahili Gerosomo just offered him one, which he accepted and consumed before he knew what he was doing.

The drive back was a nightmare, Gerosomo going at a colossal speed and taking no notice of Sympson when he told him to slow down. And then the car stopped suddenly two miles from the camp, and Sympson got out to see what was wrong, and Gerosomo drove off from right under his nose.

Sympson went into the Orderly Room next day and started looking for charge-sheets, but the Major told him not to waste time.

"Gerosomo is being repatriated to Ugomba to-day," he said. "Didn't you know?"



"Well, if you're dining with the President of the Board of Trade, the Chairman will have to take No. 3 on the stirrup-pump."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

A Victorian Individualist

ALTHOUGH overweighted with details of Victorian politics, Mr. HUTCHINSON HARRIS's *Life of Auberon Herbert* (WILLIAMS AND NORRAGE, 15/-) is both interesting in itself and relevant to the present enthusiasm for a planned society. Like his master Herbert Spencer, Auberon Herbert stood for complete individualism against the movement towards collectivism and State control which was gathering strength throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. A generous high-spirited aristocrat who, at any rate in his earlier years, enjoyed life and believed in human nature, Herbert began his political career as a kind of Tory Democrat, who, as he explained to Ruskin, wanted the masses to be well-to-do because he believed that the luxury and excess of the few would be checked if the nation as a whole were prosperous. The Conservative party taking no steps towards a redistribution of the country's wealth, Herbert became a Liberal, and was returned to Parliament in 1870 for Nottingham. A closer acquaintance with the Liberal party convinced him that they, too, were unprepared to reorganize society in the interests of the general welfare, and when in his middle thirties he met Herbert Spencer he was ripe for the acceptance of Spencer's contempt for all forms of political machinery. Summarizing at the close of his life the effect Spencer had on him, he said "I lost my faith in the great machine; I saw that thinking and acting for others had always hindered not helped the real progress; that all forms of compulsion deadened the living forces in a nation; that every evil violently stamped out still persisted, almost always in a

worse form. . . . I no longer believed that the handful of us—however well-intentioned we might be—spending our nights in the House, could manufacture the life of a nation, could endow it out of hand with happiness, wisdom and prosperity, and clothe it in all the virtues." The rest of his life was spent in the attempt to stem the growing torrent of collectivism, and though the attempt inevitably failed, and was marred by such fantastic conceptions as voluntary contributions to the national exchequer in the place of taxes, his diagnosis of the disasters implicit in State control should have more meaning for a world laid waste by totalitarianism than it had for the variegated Utopians who derided it fifty years ago. Half a century has served only to confirm the truth in his saying: "The force of kings and churches has been broken; the force that pretends to be of the people and to speak in their name remains to be overcome."

H. K.

Pillars of Eternity

The habit, so discommended at the nursery table, of "picking and choosing" has become endemic among critics of the Elizabethan age. The Renascence, protests Dr. E. M. W. TILLYARD, has been persistently advertised as a secular protest against the scholastic world order; whereas although "the new commercialism was hostile to mediæval stability," the world of thought between, say, Henry VII and Charles I was not. The great Tudors did their best to fit themselves and their comforts into the old theological pattern—one remembers Elizabeth's fury at being shown a blasphemous farce at Cambridge; and gentle and simple inherited the characteristic mediæval tension between a sense of one's sins and a sense of one's divine possibilities. If we ignore this common note, it is impossible to appreciate Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton and Donne, whose dread, even, of chaos proceeds, unlike our own, from a noble conception of order. More intricate details of *The Elizabethan World Pattern* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 6/-) enrich the second half of a human and adventurous piece of scholarship. "The Chain of Being," in which man is so vital a link, is plain sailing compared to "The Cosmic Dance," beloved of Milton and Sir John Davies, in which even man's rhythmic breathing—if one may credit Davies—chimes happily with the music of the spheres. H. P. E.

Commando Men

The novelist of the present war has undoubtedly far more promising material to his hand than was afforded by the last. The dead level of mud and blood expressed in the words "trench warfare" provided but little of what used to be called the Romance of War—rapid changes of fortune, brisk and dramatic incidents, and above all opportunities for individual daring and enterprise. The faster tempo of to-day's struggle, and the introduction of such elements as air-borne and Commando troops, have combined to bring back many of these qualities, some of which furnish the greater part of the theme of Mr. JOHN BROUGH's *Spear Head* (COLLINS, 8/6). Mr. BROUGH takes as his subject the characters and the fortunes, in love and war, of a sub-section of Commando men, and he describes both their initial training and their experiences in two raids—one on the Norwegian coast and one on Occupied France—with the force and vividness of a participant in both adventures. The phrase "love and war" has been used; but the traditional order of the two themes might here for once well be reversed; for a love-interest, however delicate and fragrant, somehow seems almost an intrusion amid the stark masculinity of Commando warfare. C. F. S.

China Without Chop Suey

Of all European cuisines the Italian has most in common with the Chinese. It is true that Chinese noodles have more eggs in them than *pasta* needs—and no warm salt water. So that you can fry noodles in some of the very admirable mixed dishes which are the homely pride of both nations. *Agro-dolce* sauce, which Italians keep for game, is used in *Chinese Cookery* (FABER, 3/6) for pork; and cuttle-fish—a Venetian speciality—can be procured dry from one of the emporiums listed here (as are the names of all the Chinese restaurants in London) and served in soup. Thus one can make an easy transition from the dishes one knows to the dishes one doesn't; especially as purely Asiatic ingredients like birds'-nests, bamboo-shoots and soy-bean sauce are still procurable. But Mr. M. P. LEE insists, and his recipes bear him out, that it is methods rather than materials that make Chinese cookery what it is. Methods are easier to acquire in war-time than materials; and the author is right in supposing that his attractive little book should make life here and now more gastronomically bearable. The book is, at any rate, the real thing: both its text and its vivacious decorations.

H. P. E.

Great Americans

The neglect of American history in our schools and universities has no doubt been largely due to the fact that the War of Independence is not one of the events to which English students of the past turn most eagerly. Blenheim and Waterloo do not bulk so largely in French histories as in English, and Saratoga and Yorktown are more vividly remembered on the other side of the Atlantic than here. The last war did much, and the present one is doing still more to dissipate this old prejudice; and if an unalloyed affection between two great nations is only a dream of after-dinner speakers, it may at least be said that the present generation of Englishmen is becoming increasingly interested in the past of a country whose future is likely to be so closely connected with that of the British Commonwealth.

The twenty-eight studies of famous Americans in this volume (*They Were Great Americans*, ALLEN AND UNWIN, 8/6), though slight, and in most instances too eulogistic to be altogether lifelike, should stimulate a desire for a closer acquaintance with their subjects. In his introduction Mr. HENRY MORGENTHAU explains that they were written at the suggestion of the Treasury Department in order to "enlarge our understanding of the challenge we face to-day." The note of the book is therefore predominantly active and patriotic. James Lawrence of the *Chesapeake*, Paul Revere of the ride so famous in the States, and not unknown even here, are included. Emerson, Hawthorne, Poe, Mark Twain and Herman Melville are not. It is easy to understand why Poe was omitted, and Hawthorne's appeal was perhaps too limited and Melville's too peculiar for the purpose of this book. But Emerson and Mark Twain were both intensely American in completely opposite ways, and it is difficult to conjecture on what principle the Sage of Concord and the pilot of the Mississippi were left out, and the picturesque French aristocrat Lafayette let in. However, to balance Lafayette there is Thomas Paine, perhaps the most uncompromising and disinterested revolutionary in history. Nearly hanged in England and nearly guillotined in France, he died, ostracized and penniless, in the United States. Within the last fifty years a famous American president referred to him as "a filthy little atheist," but in the opinion of Mr. STRUTHERS BURT, whose essay is the most interesting in the book, the true verdict on Paine

was given by Thomas Edison when he said that he might "justly be considered the founder of the American Republic."

H. K.

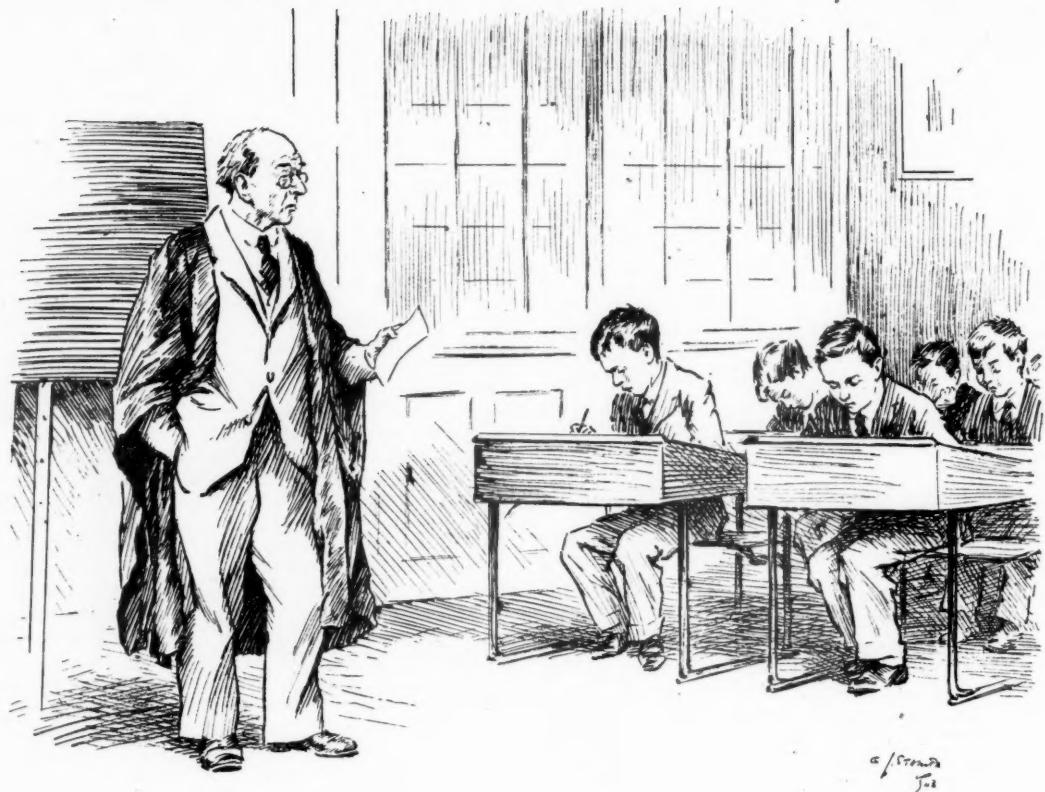
Business In Great Waters

It may surprise a good many readers of *Red Ensign* (ROBERT HALE, 12/6) to learn that merchant ships have been accustomed to sail in convoy for over six hundred years and that in the thirteenth century master mariners took oath before sailing by their "witte, power, knowledge and experience" to render assistance to admirals and "all the Compenye of Englishe shippes." Mr. OWEN RUTTER begins his history of Convoy with quotations from Monson's Naval Tracts—"What would it avail that all boughs of trees were oaks . . . every stalk of hemp a fathom of cable, or every creature a perfect artist to frame, form and build a ship . . . were it not for you, your art and skill to conduct and guide her." The author describes convoying from the earliest times, during the Tudor period (and here, very rightly, he shows Queen Elizabeth in true and unromantic light as a poor defender of mariners), the Stuart period, the eighteenth century, the Napoleonic Wars, the last war, and this present one. He has many brave stories to tell, and writes with authority of recent happenings, for, by Admiralty permission, he has had experience in convoys and escorts. The last chapter is a plea for the betterment of conditions in the Merchant Navy and a demand that our present gratitude should have a practical future. Such pleading should be unnecessary, but we have been a short-memoried people in the past. By far his best suggestion is that we should have more training ships and nautical colleges. The book is a fine piece of work, and much research must have gone to its making.

B. E. B.



"That notice is somewhat misleading these days."
"It always was."



"If seven hundred and fifty Axis troops surrender to one British tank in ten minutes, how many tanks are needed to round up one hundred and eight thousand in three-quarters of an hour?"

A Bit of Bad Luck

"IT'S that boy of mine," said Mr. Smergin. "It's simply awful. You don't know what a mess the place is in. I have known this house all my life. I know where everything is; I've got used to it. And now look what a mess it is in."

He turned to me for corroboration.

"Well, I did notice the door-scraper," I said.

"The door-scraper!" he repeated. "I should think you did! Did you ever see anything like it?"

"Well, I thought it was looking a bit yellow," I said.

"A bit yellow!" he snorted. "And it isn't only that; it's every bit of metal in the house. He must have been at it all night. He just went all through the house with that infernal battery of his. You see, I gave him a very fine electric battery, because he is

clever about those things; no doubt of that; and I never grudged the expense. It cost me a lot; more than I could afford really; and he went on making his inventions, and I left him alone. It isn't every boy that would have been allowed to do exactly what he liked, and live all his time at home. Very few. And now look what he's done. This fender, for instance. I have rested my feet on it for years. And now look at it. And the poker and tongs too! One can't have fire-irons like that. I should become a laughing-stock for the whole neighbourhood. There may be people who'd like to do it, but I'm not that kind of man. And without saying a word to me. Of course I wasn't interested in all his electrical inventions. Well, interested in a way. But I didn't know enough to talk about them; so I never interfered

with the boy. Much better that way. But he might have told me what he was going to do. This electrical treatment that he discovered, he has tried it on everything in the house; every bit of metal, that is. Thank goodness he couldn't spoil anything else! But it is bad enough as it is."

"Yes. I see that the fireplace has gone all yellow," I said.

"Gone yellow!" said Smergin. "He has turned the whole thing to gold."

"To gold?" I gasped.

"Yes, and that's not all," said Smergin. "He has gone through the whole house."

"But—to gold?" I said.

"You see," said Smergin, "he made this infernal discovery and he worked at it I suppose for about a year, and now you see what he has done. He did say something about it once, and I wish

I had listened, but it is too late now. If you listen to all the talk of a boy of eighteen you'll be asked to replan the world; and I haven't time for it. What he said was that there was in reality only one element, but that the atoms were differently arranged in different metals. Not very new; the alchemists were after that; and I didn't pay much attention. Then he talked about some sort of electrical current that would rearrange the atoms. And that's evidently what he has done—rearranged them so that what was decent iron and steel is now this filthy gold. What it will cost me to put it right heaven knows; not to mention all the money I spent on his infernal instruments."

"What it will cost you?" I said. "What it will cost you! Why, if this is really gold . . ."

"It is," he said.

"If this is really gold," I went on, "you need never bother about costs any more."

"That is what you think," he said. "Now listen to me. The havoc he has worked with the fireplace and fender and fire-irons he has worked all over the house. This same insane pomposity that I have been made to exhibit goes from the door-scraper to the lavatories. I tell you there are cheap and common chains that are pure gold. I couldn't even wear one of them as a watch-chain, because its origin is too obvious. Everything of that sort in the house will have to be scrapped, including this poor old fireplace. There'll be endless work for the plumber. Oh, yes, I know what you are going to say: I can sell it all. But that is not so easy, and I will tell you why—apart from the fact that I liked this old fireplace and should never have dreamed of having it replaced by one of the nasty little things they make nowadays. But I'll tell you why it is not so easy to sell it. To begin with, do you realize what the income-tax is?"

"I do," I said.

"Very well," he said, "add that to the highest scale of super-tax and you will see what I will have to pay the moment I begin to touch this business that seems to you so easy. It doesn't leave much for the plumber. And there is another complication, and a very serious one: as soon as I begin to sell gold door-scrappers, down will come people asking not only for fifty per cent. income-tax and forty per cent. super-tax, and probably a hundred per cent. excess profits, but they will want to know the sources of my income that enabled me to buy these ridiculous objects. I might as well throw a stone through a window of Somerset House:

they will all come. And they will all want to know. And I can't tell them. You see, they aren't going to have one man cornering the gold-supply. And it is perfectly obvious that the moment they found out they'd slip a law through Parliament that afternoon. Then I should get nothing; and I have got to pay the plumber, for I am not going to have lavatories like that in my house: I am not that kind of man. So perhaps you see that it is not quite so easy as you thought. The house is in an awful mess. The expense will be enormous, not to mention the worry; and the sale of all this junk a very complicated matter of business. Whether it will pay the plumber or not, I really can't say. I don't even know what all the taxes come to. About 19s. 6d. in the pound, I think; but I really don't know. And that is leaving out excess profits.

"My boy is merely delighted with what he has done; mildly apologetic for having annoyed me, and quite definitely certain that it cannot be undone. And I am afraid I have to take his word for that. So you see what a mess I am in.

"And that is not all; there is another thing. Do you know that my life is in danger? We are not a mile from the edge of London; and you can't have golden door-scrappers. Of course I can take them inside; but that's not all;

there's the lightning-conductor. He said it went up that like a flash. Any-way the whole thing is gold. I don't mean the danger of being struck by lightning; though there is that; but that is a very small affair. I mean that the moment this gets out I shall have the pick of the burglars of London down here. And things like that do get out very quickly.

"And even the gutters; he's made a mess of them too: my house will be torn to pieces by what they call a gold-rush. Pretty rough men that take part in those gold-rushes, anywhere in the world. I'll never stand a chance.

"Now what on earth am I to do? What on earth am I to do? I never saw such a mess."

ANON.

Another Man's Poison

I NOTICE that Tennyson
Gives his benison
To "acclaims"
As a rhyme for "Thames,"
And even Keats
Cheats
With "higher"
And "Thalia."

To me such licence seems ignominious,
But I am a literary hack, not a genius.



"And would it be suitable to give to the salvage people after I've read it?"

Comes Dropping Fast

NOW that *The Times* has been described (in the House of Commons) as a threepenny edition of *The Daily Worker* we are all, as it were, as one. I myself would have preferred the statement in the form "*The Daily Worker* is now the penny edition of *The Times*." But that is only an idle thought of scansion which does not materially affect the great news that Britain is truly united. That simple matter-of-fact pronouncement has cleared the air, the lines and the decks. We can look forward to articles in both journals subscribed "*The Times* and *The Daily Worker* Service."

This preamble should put the reader in the right frame of mind to receive the important advice that follows. It has been prepared by the distinguished psychologist P. R. Sheepshanks—a

man so far ahead of his times that he is at the moment using a diary for 1945. Sheepshanks believes that the war will end suddenly; so suddenly that there will be no time to warn the people against the excesses into which their delirium will hurl them. This document should be read carefully, cut out and kept for reference.

WHAT DO I DO IF . . . AN ARMISTICE IS SIGNED TO-MORROW?

1. I wait for two or three days before cashing my post-war credits. I remember that other and more deserving cases must enjoy priority.

2. I repair my gas-mask, find my ear-plugs and empty the Anderson so that all will be ready and in order when the Government decides to collect them.

3. I return *War and Peace* to the Library.

4. I begin to eat up the tinned herrings.

5. I continue to fire-watch until the final rubber is completed.

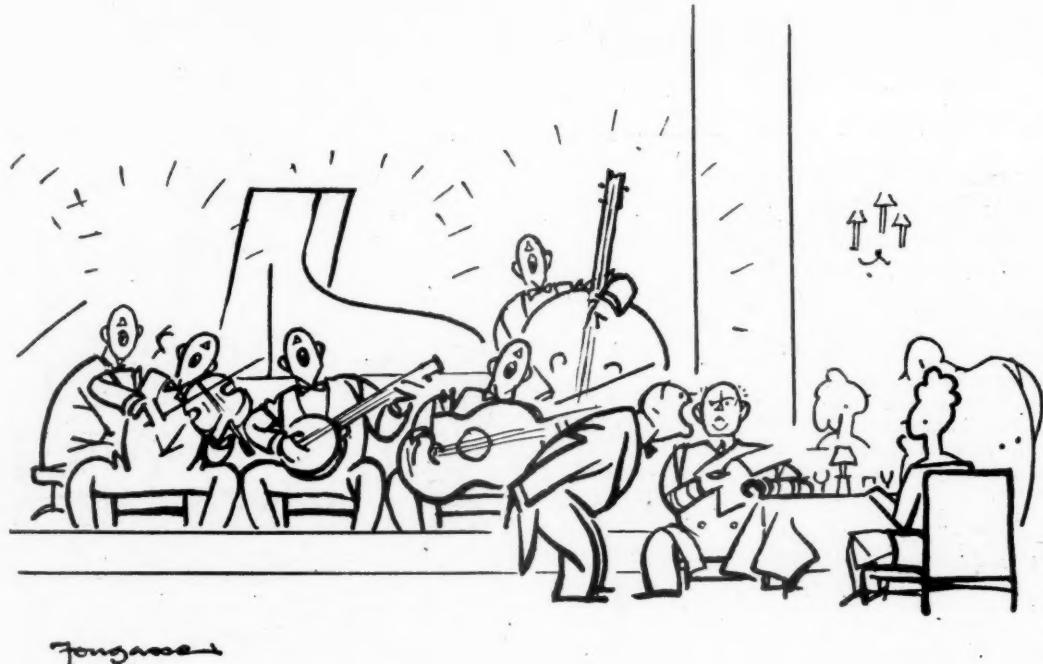
6. I drop a few hints to my butcher without expecting immediate gains.

7. Finally, I try to remain calm. I do not panic. I try to remember that the Government has accepted the Beveridge Report in principle.

• •

"Under the existing system these facilities enjoyed (or otherwise) are to all children. Too often the facilities enjoyer (or otherwise) are the result of geographical accident or economic sufficiency (or the opposite)."—*Cheshire Paper*.

Quite (or not).

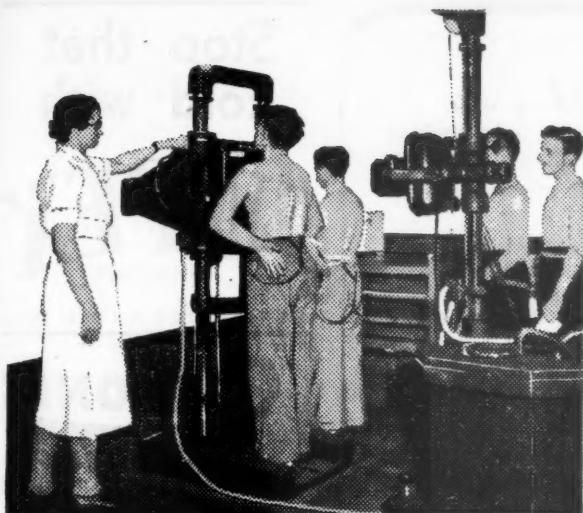


"And the extra five shillings, Sir, is for LISTENING TO THE BAND!"

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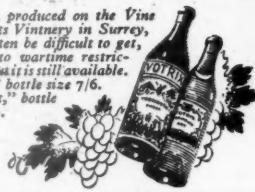


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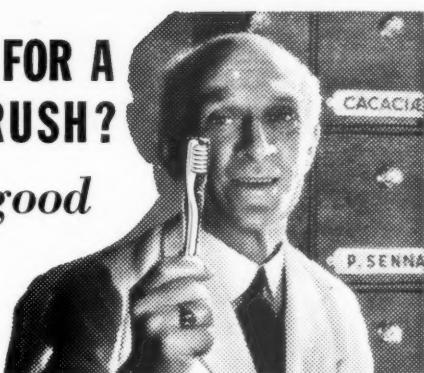


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